

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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Action
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Control: 12318

Rec'd: MARCH 16, 1963
10:20 AM

213

Info

FROM: MOSCOW

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 2310, MARCH 16, 2 PM

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ACTION DEPARTMENT 2310, INFORMATION LONDON 233, PARIS 267,
BONN 163, HONG KONG 78, GENEVA 60.

I. THERE SEEMS TO US TO HAVE BEEN AN UNMISTAKABLE CHANGE IN THE SOVIET POSTURE DURING THE PAST SIX WEEKS, IN PARTICULAR A DRAWING BACK FROM THE FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE TOWARD EAST-WEST PROBLEMS WHICH FOLLOWED THE CUBAN CRISIS AND LASTED ROUGHLY THROUGH MY TALK WITH GROMYKO ON JANUARY 26, PRIOR TO MY DEPARTURE FOR WASHINGTON CONSULTATIONS. THE MAJOR FACTOR IS CERTAINLY MOSCOW'S PREOCCUPATION WITH THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PROBLEM, IN THE LIGHT OF THE UNEXPECTEDLY (TO MOSCOW) VIOLENT NATURE OF THE CHICOMS' OPEN OPPOSITION TO KHRUSHCHEV'S "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE" POLICIES AND OF THE INCREASINGLY OBVIOUS FAILURE OF THOSE POLICIES TO PRODUCE RESULTS IN TERMS OF COMMUNIST OBJECTIVES. MOSCOW APPARENTLY FEELS THAT NO ACCORD (TEST-BAN, GERMANY/BERLIN, RISK-OF-WAR MEASURES) IS IN PROSPECT WITH THE WEST WHICH WOULD NOT AGGRAVATE ITS DIFFICULTIES WITH THE CHICOMS AND BE VULNERABLE TO LATTER'S ATTACKS. RESULTANT DOLDRUMS (IF NOT ACTUAL CHILL) IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS SEEMS LIKELY TO PERSIST AT LEAST UNTIL SOVIET LEADERSHIP DECIDES HOW TO DEAL WITH CHICOMS AND STARTS TO DO SO. THIS CLEARLY IS NOW PRIORITY SUBJECT FOR CONSIDERATION AND DEBATE WITHIN LEADERSHIP HERE (THOUGH WE KNOW OF NO FACTUAL BASIS FOR RUMORS OF SERIOUS OPPOSITION TO KHRUSHCHEV, WHICH ARE, IN ANY CASE, RECURRENT MOSCOW PHENOMENON). PROCESS MAY WELL BE LENGTHY AND OUTCOME PRESENTLY UNPREDICTABLE.

II. FOLLOWING ARE PRINCIPAL FACTORS LEADING US TO THESE CONCLUSIONS:

1. SINCE MY RETURN, I AM NO LONGER SERENADED BY SOVIET POST-CUBA
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THEME SONG OF NEED TO MOVE AHEAD TOWARD SOLUTION OF OUT-
STANDING EAST-WEST PROBLEMS BY "COMPROMISE" AND "MUTUAL CONCESSIONS".
INSTEAD I AM ASSAILED BY ACCUSATIONS UNITED STATES NOT INTERESTED
IN SETTLING PROBLEMS, WHICH BY WELL-KNOWN SOVIET THOUGH-PROCESS
OF INVERSION, WOULD INDICATE LOSS OF INTEREST ON THEIR PART.

2. SOVIETS ARE NOT ONLY STANDING PAT ON TEST BAN AND
DEPRECATING DISARMAMENT POSSIBILITIES BUT ARE ADOPTING DILATORY
TACTICS ON GERMANY/BERLIN, ON WHICH THEY BUT RECENTLY TOOK
INITIATIVE.

3. EVOLUTION OF BONN-PARIS AXIS WITH ITS IMPLICATIONS IN MILITARY
AND POLITICAL FIELDS IS CAUSING ANXIETY AND EVEN EVOKING
REPEATED REFERENCES IN KHRUSHCHEV'S RECENT SPEECHES TO
"COMPLICATED NATURE" OF INTERNATIONAL SITUATION - A SURPRISING
STATEMENT FROM THE NO. 1 EXPONENT OF HISTORIC DETERMINISM.

4. KHRUSHCHEV'S RECENT TALKS WITH SEVERAL FOREIGN DIPLOMATS
HAVE BEEN DISINTERESTED AND ESSENTIALLY PRO FORMA IN NATURE.

5. SOVIETS ARE INCREASINGLY DISILLUSIONED WITH ANTI-COMMUNIST
ACTIVITIES OF NEW NATIONS (FROM MOROCCO THROUGH ARAB STATES
TO INDIA) TO WHICH THEY LOOKED WITH SUCH ASSURANCE FOR
"PEACEFUL" PROMOTION OF THEIR GOALS AND IN WHICH THEY HAVE
MADE, FOR THEM, HEAVY INVESTMENTS.

6. THEY ARE INCREASINGLY CONSCIOUS OF TENDENCY MANY ASIAN-
AFRICAN AND LATIN AMERICAN COMMIE PARTIES TO SWING TOWARD
CHICOM THESES.

7. EVEN IN EASTERN EUROPE THEY ARE PLAGUED BY PERSISTENT
ECONOMIC SHORTCOMINGS AMONG SMALLER MEMBERS OF BLOC AND SOVIET
INABILITY FORCE PACE OF ECONOMIC INTEGRATION WITHIN CEMA.

III. CURRENT TIGHTENING UP ON DOMESTIC SCENE BOTH ECONOMICALLY
AND IDEOLOGICALLY CERTAINLY NOT UNRELATED TO STAND-STILL IN

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EAST-WEST RELATIONS AND TO CONFLICT WITH CHICOMS BUT WE BELIEVE PURELY INTERNAL FACTORS ALSO PLAY SUBSTANTIAL ROLE HERE.

ACUTELY CONSCIOUS OF SOVIET WEAKNESS DRAMATICALLY EXPOSED IN CUBAN CRISIS, SOVIETS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO FACE UP TO RADICAL REDISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES WHICH WOULD BE ESSENTIAL TO REMOVE CONTINUING SLUGGISHNESS FROM SOVIET ECONOMY, AND ESPECIALLY TO SOLVE AGRICULTURAL PROBLEM. INTERNATIONALLY, KHRUSHCHEV HAS THUS LOST BASIC TENET OF HIS "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE" THEME, I.E., SOVIET ABILITY TO DEMONSTRATE TO WORLD SUPERIORITY BY EXAMPLE IN ECONOMIC COMPETITION WITH WEST. BUT EQUALLY IMPORTANT, SOVIET PEOPLE ARE NOT UNAWARE OF KHRUSHCHEV'S FAILURE TO LIVE UP TO HIS REPEATED PROMISES TO IMPROVE THEIR LOT AND HIS RECENT PUBLIC ADMISSION REGIME CANNOT PROVIDE BOTH GUNS AND BUTTER MUST HAVE BEEN A BITTER PILL FOR HIM TO SWALLOW.

PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH THE CAPITALIST WORLD IN THE IDEOLOGICAL FIELD WAS RULED OUT BY KHRUSHCHEV AS EARLY AS HIS NOVOSIBIRSK SPEECH OF OCTOBER 10, 1959, AFTER VISITS TO USA AND CHINA. CURRENT CLAMP-DOWN IN CULTURAL FIELD IS THUS NOT A NEW POLICY BUT ONLY FIRST PURPOSEFUL EFFORT TO IMPLEMENT KHRUSHCHEV'S FORMULATION THAT COEXISTENCE ONLY APPLIES OUTSIDE SOVIET BORDERS AND IS CONTINUATION OF STRUGGLE FOR COMMUNIST WORLD BY MEANS SHORT OF MAJOR WAR. HOWEVER, IDEOLOGICAL CLAMP-DOWN HAS DEVELOPED ONE ISSUE OF POTENTIALLY CRITICAL INTERNAL IMPORTANCE IN SOCIETY LIKE THIS. SOONER OR LATER, SOMEONE WAS BOUND TO RAISE QUESTION INSIDE THE SOVIET UNION WHICH HAS SO FREQUENTLY BEEN ASKED OUTSIDE: WHY STALIN'S ASSOCIATES DID NOT REVEAL AND TAKE ACTION TO STOP HIS CRIMINAL TERROR DURING HIS LIFE TIME. IT HAPPENS THAT EHRENBURG WAS THE ONE TO RAISE THIS QUESTION IN PRINT, SO THE FUROR FOCUSED ON HIM--FOR THIS REASON AND NOT PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF WHAT HE HAS WRITTEN OTHERWISE OR EVEN BECAUSE HE IS A JEW. IN REPLY, KHRUSHCHEV CHOSE IN HIS SPEECH OF MARCH 8 TO STATE FLATLY THAT: "STALIN'S ABUSE OF POWER AND THE FACTS OF HIS ARBITRARY RULE BECAME KNOWN TO US ONLY AFTER HIS DEATH AND THE EXPOSURE OF BERIA." THE BASELESSNESS OF THIS ASSERTION COULD BE DEMONSTRATED BY RECOURSE TO

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THE FILES OF ANY WESTERN EMBASSY IN MOSCOW COVERING THE STALIN YEARS OR EVEN TO THE WORLD PRESS. HOWEVER, IT MUST BE APPRECIATED THAT THIS IS THE KIND OF ISSUE WHICH MAY DETERMINE SOME DAY WHO SURVIVES OR WHO FALLS IN THIS COUNTRY.

IV. AS FOR KHRUSHCHEV PERSONALLY, HE HAS CONTINUED TO DRIVE HIMSELF UNMERCIFULLY, PARTICIPATING IN OFFICIAL CEREMONIES AND RECEIVING VISITORS TO AN EXTENT WESTERN HEADS OF GOVERNMENT WOULD CONSIDER A WASTE OF TIME. HOWEVER, IN RECENT WEEKS HE HAS CLEARLY BEEN A TIRED MAN. IN DELIVERING HIS RECENT ELECTION SPEECH AND IN MAKING THE ROUNDS OF RECEPTIONS WITH THE FINNISH PRIME MINISTER HE DISPLAYED LITTLE OF HIS NORMAL VIVACITY AND READ HIS SPEECHES IN A LISTLESS, MONOTONOUS VOICE. AT PUBLIC GATHERINGS, INSTEAD OF FOLLOWING PROCEEDINGS WITH HIS USUAL LIVELY ATTENTION OR ENGAGING IN ANIMATED, FREQUENTLY BANTERING CONVERSATIONS, HE HAS APPEARED DISPIRITED AND HAD THE AIR OF A MAN OVERWHELMED BY HIS BURDENS. HOWEVER, KHRUSHCHEV HAS DEMONSTRATED HIS RESILIENCY BEFORE, IS TAKING THE PRECAUTION OF GETTING OUT OF TOWN FOR A WHILE, AND MAY WELL BOUNCE BACK WITH NEW VIGOR. IN ANY EVENT, HIS CURRENT DEPRESSION SEEMS CLEARLY TO RESULT LESS FROM ANY DIFFICULTIES WITH HIS COLLEAGUES THAN FROM HIS DIFFICULTIES WITH A COMPLICATED WORLD WHICH NO LONGER FITS HIS EARLIER CONFIDENT ANALYSES.

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